

Application, scope, and intent of OSFM “*CBC Ch7A Compliance Policies.*”

CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) has begun to issue policies to facilitate implementation and understanding of California Building Code (CBC) Ch7A “*Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure.*” CBC Ch7A Compliance Policies” address those aspects of OSFM plan review and construction inspection that are not clearly addressed by existing regulation. Ch7A Compliance Policies typically supplement OSFM Code Interpretations, and Information Bulletins by elaborating on the intent of the regulations and providing resolutions to implementation issues. These resolutions offer acceptable methods of achieving compliance with applicable codes and regulations and may include alternate materials, designs, tests, and methods of construction which provide equivalent protection. In addition, OSFM will use Ch7A Compliance Policies in limited cases to identify specific products that meet the intent of the code and are accepted for use.

The application of these policies is limited to OSFM plan review and construction inspection projects where OSFM has jurisdiction, typically state owned buildings. Other enforcing agencies may or may not adopt similar methods of administering current code requirements. Other enforcing agencies include city and county building officials and state agencies such as the Department of Housing and Community Development which have final authority over such things as approving alternate methods of compliance.

Because exterior wildfire exposure protection is new to the building code and the concept is still evolving nationally, OSFM compliance policies will be limited to the implementation of CBC Ch7A and related provisions of CCR Title 24 regulations. The policies will be used by OSFM staff on OSFM jurisdiction projects and provided to stakeholders and design professionals as a resource to promote more uniform statewide implementation but other methods proposed by design professionals may be considered.

References to CBC are to the California Building Code in effect at the time of policy issuance or revision date. Ch7A refers to CBC Chapter 7A “*Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure,*” “code” refers to the California Building Code and all related provisions of CCR Title 24 regulations.